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THE NEWS BULLETIN OF THE NEAR EAST CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

"... From Iran to Morocco, from Turkey to the Sudan..."

SUMMER 1958

Bishop Lesslie Newbigin
Chairman of International Missionary Council
Leading Devotions at NECC Triennial

The Near East Christian Council

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The Near East Christian Council is made up of four regional councils : Iran, Egypt, Northern Sudan and the United Christian Council for Southwest Asia (for Syria, Lebanon and Jordan). In these regions and in other countries, church bodies and missionary societies are also members of the Council.

The Near East Christian Council is an organization that seeks to make effective cooperation and witness of the churches in an area extending from Morocco and Algeria to Iran and Arabia, from Turkey to the Sudan and Ethiopia.

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THE STRONG NAME OF THE TRINITY

A VIEW OF THE 1958 TRIENNIAL MEETING

« I bind unto myself this day
The strong Name of the Trinity.»
St. Patrick

It was morning in Beirut, and the hour drew close for the opening session of the Twelfth Plenary Meeting of the *Near East Christian Council.* Delegates, representatives, and friends had gathered from all the corners of the world to share in this meeting. There were those from the countries bordering the Mediterranean in North Africa, those from the torrid forests and flats of the Sudan, those from Iran, from the mountains of the north to the high plateaux of the south. They had come from the great cities of the Near East, from the sands of Arabia, from the rural outposts. From every background, from many communions, they had come to share in three days of fellowship and discussion of the topics vital to the life of the Church of our Lord in the Near East.

Varieties of reports were being prepared, speakers were jotting down new ideas and notes, last minute arrivals were finding bed and board. Old friendships were re-warmed, and new fellowship was being made. The variety of subjects on the agenda seemed to lead to shallow treatment and naught else.

Yet, we gathered in the National Evangelical Church for our opening devotional theme, and there we found the unity of thought we needed. The Right Rev. Lesslie Newbigin,

Bishop of Madura of the Church of South India, unfolded before us the task of Christian Mission — our work, what we were doing there in Beirut — as the Work of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our unity was made perfect as it was manifested in the Divine Being of the Holy Trinity. In this strong Name, we bound ourselves to labor and to work and to pray.

The love of the Father, the atonement of the Son, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit .... by that strong Name of Holy Trinity we stand. The words of Bishop Newbigin, newly elected Chairman of the International Missional Missionary Council, spoken from the background of South India, Ghana and Nigeria, reached out with special meaning into the fields of our own labours and works. Each morning of the meeting we felt the leading edge of these observations cut into the diverse matter before us. All of our conversations, all of our reports, all of our decisions, fell uniquely under the fullness of this piercing study.

«God so loved the world .....» His purpose reaches out into the lives of all men. This is the meaning of the report of work among the homeless and distressed refugees. This is the glimmer of light that shines as we hear of the work carried on among the blind. This alone is the Fatherly love that demands of us everything we have and are.

«God made the world and He loves the world ....» There can be no greater banner to guide us into the rural areas amongst illiterates and possessionless folk. This is the challenge of our medical work whenever it may be found. This is the message of our evangelists, priests and pastors. «God loves the world, He sends His Son, Who in turn sends us....»

The reports of Ghana and the IMC meeting, the All-Africa Conference in Nigeria, all fitted in as the challenge and the witness. The report of youth work and evangelism, the fron-

tiers of education and scholarship and theological training took their place not as a manifestation of what we had done or should do, but rather as the way in which the Spirit guided us into new truth. We felt the sting of the question, «What is our witness to Islam?» as the Study Program chairman proposed it, and we examined how we show it in our literature, our audio-visual work, our life as a Family of God. We shared the cross of our youth and the problems of our families. We prayed for guidance in presenting the timeless truth of Holy Scripture in young people's and sunday school literature.

And in the fellowship of the Spirit, we shared common concerns in the Mission of the Church. We thrilled to the enthusiasm of the Coptic Evangelical Church's missionary amongst the animists of south Sudan. The sin of our division and divisiveness hurt when we shared the common problems of proselytism and religious liberty, but in the loving words of Metropolitan James, our hopes were nurtured once again as he reached into the heart of our needs, and in the glorious fellowship of the Spirit, raised our vision.

This was the knowledge of history that is summed up in the Name of the Father, who loves us, and of the Son, who has provided forgiveness and atonement for all, and of the Holy Spirit, who witnesses and convicts us of all truth. Gathering there in Beirut, in April 1958, we re-affirmed our faith in the «strong Name of the Trinity,» knowing that as His channels, agents of His grace, communion and fellowship, we must witness to what He has done for the world in love and forgiveness. And unto Him be the praise.....

PERSONALITIES OF THE TRIENNIAL

The Triennial Meeting of the *Near East Christian Council* called together in Beirut at the end of April a distinguished company of men and women deeply committed to the service of their Lord. Some of them are known in every land where the mission of the church is actively carried forward; others are working faithfully in a quiet corner of His vineyard in the Near Eastern lands.

The Council could not have found a leader for the devotional periods of this meeting more suitably representing the mission of the church than *Bishop Lesslie Newbigin* of the Church of South India, Chairman of the International Missionary Council. He represents the ecumenical movement in its world-wide aspects, as it binds together the church east and west in one evangel to the world; and at the same time he represents the great task of the church to maintain its unity in Christ in the local scene. Bishop Newbigin is one of the architects of that great challenge to church union, the Church of South India. He knows the difficulties and disappointments of the work for church union, and also the deep satisfactions and joys that go with the work. His books have made him well known as an interpreter of «the household of God». As chaplain of the Triennial Meeting he spoke on : «The Mission of the Church as the Work of the Triune God : I. As the Work of God the Father; II. As the Work of God the Son; III. As the Work of God the Holy Spirit.»

Dr. Glora M. Wysner, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, has been a well known figure in the Near

East ever since she assumed the special responsibility of the I.M.C. for our area. Her missionary contribution was first made in Algeria among the Kabyle people, and her book on them is an authority in the field. She has done much to strengthen the work of the Christian home and family life both in Asia and in Africa, and our N.E.C.C. Study Program on Islam owes much to her planning and encouragement.

Dr. Roland W. Scott and *Dr. Frederick J. Rex* were with us as representatives of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. *Dr. Scott,* Secretary of the Joint Office for Southern Asia and the Near East of the Division of Foreign Missions, trails a formidable array of initials after his secretaryship : JOSANE-DFMNCCCUSA. It is through his office that the representatives of the mission boards in the United States have been working together to make available more than half the income of the annual budget of the *N.E.C.C.* Dr. Scott came to the meeting at the end of a prolonged tour of the Near East and India, the country to which he gave many years of missionary service. *Dr. Rex* is the Educational Secretary of the D.F.M. Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature, which is directly responsible for the greater part of the annual subsidies to our *N.E.C.C.* literature work. From Beirut he was going to Egypt to visit the important project in rural literacy that has its center in Literacy House in Minia.

Dr. Daisuke Kitagawa brought to the Council the greetings of the World Council of Churches. As Secretary in the Division of Studies he has been visiting this area to help plan for the conference to be held here next year on the Christian responsibility for areas of rapid social change. Through a local committee on this subject, Dr. Kitagawa's Division of the W.C.C. has been gathering material on the study in the Near East.

Of special interest to the whole Council was the presence of *Father Bahnam Jajjawi,* delegate of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and all the East. He represented the first official membership of an orthodox communion in the Council. Father Jajjawi is at present locum tenens in the bishopric of Beirut and representative of the Patriarch in this area.

Among the old friends of the Council, several were welcomed as the recipients of recent honors or as appearing in a new official capacity. *The Very Rev. Campbell MacInnes,* Archbishop in Jerusalem, personifies a long and well-loved family tradition of service to the church in these lands. Both he and Mrs. MacInnes, a granddaughter of Bishop Gobat of Jerusalem, were born in Palestine. His father was Bishop in Jerusalem before him. They returned last summer to the field of their earlier service, and Archbishop MacInnes is the first to fill the newly created position of Archbishop in Jerusalem. *Bishop Najib Cubain,* Associate Secretary of the *Near East Christian Council* during the last three years, has also recently assumed a new and significant position as the first Arab bishop to be consecrated in Jordan. In him are fulfilled hopes of long standing, as his church moves forward into a new era of national leadership and responsibility.

The retiring Chairman of the Council, the *Rev. Labib Mishriky,* is pastor of the Evangelical Church in Old Cairo. He is at present serving for the second time as Moderator of the Synod of the Nile. At the recent ceremony in Cairo in which the Synod became a national church completely independent of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Rev. Labib Mishriky was awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity by President Montgomery of Muskingum College. The newly elected Chairman of the *N.E.C.C.,* who has served for the past three years as Vice-chairman, is the *Rev. Adle Nakhosteen* of the Episcopal diocese of Iran. In Teheran he is in charge of

the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society, whose colporteurs move throughout the country. He represents a church that is small numerically in comparison with some others, but is of unique significance in that it is a wholly convert church.

Bishop Ferdinand Sigg was a delegate from North Africa, although his headquarters are in Zurich. As Bishop of the Geneva Area of the Methodist Church, he is responsible also for North Africa. Bishop Sigg serves as Chairman of the Swiss Council of Evangelical Missionary Societies, and he brought greetings to the *N.E.C.C.* from the Swiss Council. Also a member of the Swiss Council is *Mr. Roger Burnier,* who attended the Triennial Meeting as a representative of the Action Chrétienne en Orient. He is the General Secretary of the Swiss Branch of the Action.

Four officially appointed observers represented various eastern orthodox communions at the meeting. *Metropolitan James of Melita,* an internationally known figure in ecumenical circles, is the personal representative of the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople at the World Council of Churches, and thus has his headquarters in Geneva. He was present with us not only in his capacity as official observer for the Ecumenical Patriarch, but bringing greetings as well from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchs of Antioch and of Alexandria. His friendly interest in the Council was shown in his informal address to the Assembly, and in his comments on the work of the Council and the situation in the Near East in regard to inter-church cooperation. *Bishop Zgon Der-Hagopian,* Primate of the Armenian Orthodox Church in Iraq, represented the Armenian Orthodox Patriarch-elect of Jerusalem. *Father Ardavazt Terterian* represented the Armenian Orthodox Catholicossate of Cis; he is director of the seminary for theological students at Antillias. *Father John Sekkab* represented the Greek Orthodox archbishopric of Beirut.

Two of our own Council members are representatives in the ecumenical movement, and through them we are always in direct contact with the I.M.C. and the W.C.C. The *Rev. Hovhannes Aharonian,* Acting Principal of the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, is a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and has a long experience in ecumenical gatherings. He is a pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Union, and delegate from the United Christian Council of Southwest Asia. *Dr. Farid Audeh,* pastor of the National Evangelical Church of Beirut, is a member of the Administrative Committee of the International Missionary Council. He is on the N.E.C.C. Executive Committee, and one of our delegates to the International Missionary Council. He also has a long record of attendance at international church assemblies.

The *Rev. Hans Aurbakken* of the Methodist Church in Algiers was the delegate to come the longest distance to the Triennial Meeting. It was of importance to the Council to have a representative from that most significant area so fraught with problems for the Christian work today. It was a cause for joy also that the Danish Mission and the Church of Scotland Mission in Aden were for the first time able to send a delegate, the *Rev. Erik Stidsen,* and that thus the southern coast of Arabia as well as the northern was represented. The *Rev. Garabet Abdul-Ahad,* delegate from Iraq, pastor of the Evangelical Church of Basrah, has served the church in Iraq ever since his people had to leave Turkey after the first world war. Until recently he carried a burden of responsibility as the only ordained national pastor in Iraq; already there is one other, and soon there will be two, ministering to the churches in Baghdad and Kirkuk.

Dr. Reid Shields of Khartoum attended the meeting as delegate of the American Mission in North Sudan. He has a long record of interest in and service to the Near East Christian Council. Among the younger delegates the *Rev. Swailem*

Sidhom was of special interest when he described to the Assembly his work at Malakal. Appointed as missionaries of the Synod of the Nile to the South Sudan, he and his wife have been working among some of the most primitive pagan tribes of Africa. They are attached to the American Mission of the Upper Nile.

Four full time workers make up the secretariat of the Council. *Dr. Harry Dorman* as Executive Secretary was in charge of the arrangements of the meeting. *Mr. Willard Jones,* Executive Secretary for Refugee Work, gave the report for his work and introduced its business. His headquarters are in Jerusalem, but he is constantly on the move between one and another of the areas for which he has responsibility, in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Gaza. *Mr. Habib Said,* Literature Secretary, presented literature matters. His office is in Cairo, but his bailiwick includes the whole area of the Council. *Dr. Kenneth Cragg,* Canon of St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, is in residence in that city, but during the last year and a half he has been absent far more than in residence. As Director of the N.E.C.C. Study Program on Islam he has travelled all over the Near East, and outside it as well. The Council was concerned to evaluate the important contribution that the Study Program has been making during this experimental period, and to insure its continuance and development.

Of other delegates and visitors there is not space to speak in detail. Together they were an impressive representation of the denominational and inter-denominational work going forward in the Near East in the name of Christ.

REACHING OUT . . .

AN OUTLINE OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

«There are Muslim reasons, and Qur'anic reasons, for believing in Christ.» This point of view, not in itself wholly new, but with a fresh sympathy and a freshness of approach, has been under discussion during the last eighteen months in groups all over the Near East. Dr. Kenneth Cragg, Director of the new Study Program on Islam of the *Near East Christian Council,* has moved with untiring energy into the task of visiting almost every corner of the Council's area, gathering about him church leaders and missionaries, and talking with them about the relation of the Christian to the Muslim. In some places he has conducted an institute of studies for two or three weeks, with lectures and discussions. In others there have been more informal meetings, sometimes only for two or three days. In Turkey Dr. Cragg has held such meetings in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Talas, Tarsus, and Gaziantep; in Lebanon in Beirut and Sidon; in Jordan in Jerusalem, Amman, and Ramallah; in Iraq in Baghdad, Mosul, Amarah, Hillah, and Basrah; in the Gulf in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Muscat; in Iran in Teheran and Isfahan; then also in Aden, Addis Ababa, Khartoum, Cairo, Tunis, and Algiers. He has met groups and given courses outside our area too in India and Pakistan, and in West Africa in Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. Wherever he has been, folk have been reassessing their understanding of Islam, their own relation to Muslims, and their approach to the major task of outreach.

In his report to the Triennial Meeting of the NECC at Beirut in April, Dr. Cragg mentioned four areas in which the Study Program is effective or should become effective. In the

first place, Christians are coming into a deeper awareness of Islam, deeper in the sense of an understanding from within, a psychological understanding of what Islam feels about things, and especially about God and man and Christ, prayer and devotion and obedience. Second, this study of Islam is in many places uniting divergent Christian groups in one common study and purpose. Mission groups and churches that have been proceeding quite independently of one another have come together to study this major task of understanding and outreach. In the third place, the Study Program is making a start, and hopes to go much further, in keeping Christians informed as to what Islam is thinking about Christianity. Especially in those publications where Muslims are thinking about Christ and seeking to interpret him to fellow-Muslims, it is important to know what is being said. Fourthly, the Program has afforded, and we hope will continue to afford, opportunities to interpret Christianity to Muslims. Aleready Dr. Cragg has spoken directly about Christianity to audiences that were largely Muslim, both in Asia and in Africa.

This Study Program of the *NECC* has been made possible through the prayers and efforts of several different groups. In the Near East, in Great Britain, and in the United States, hopes and plans grew up independently, and then two years ago drew together in the providence of God to result in Dr. Cragg's coming to lead this work as Director. His presence is made possible by the support of the Anglican and the Episcopal communions in England and the United Etates. His appointment as Canon of St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem has assured a place of residence and a center from which to operate. The Division of Foreign Missions of the NCCC-USA has provided the operational budget and the funds for travel. The International Missionary Council has helped with special expenses outside the budget, and with constant advice and support in other ways. All things have worked together.

During the last ten months a study paper has been published by Dr. Cragg entitled *Operation Reach.* Its circulation has increased with every issue, and it now goes to a wide constituency in Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America. Published every second month, it contains material for study groups or for individuals to use, with two subjects for each month, the study from the Bible to proceed along with the study of the topic from the Qur'an or Muslim religious life. The topics have been as follows :

Sept.	: A Christian's Reach and Grasp	A Study in the Fatihah
Oct.	: The Grace of God	The Prophet in the Qur'an
Nov.	: The Friendship of Christ	The Qur'an on Itself
Dec.	: The Yoke of Christ	The Soul of Shi'ah Islam
Jan.	: «Involved in Mankind»	The Soul of a Sufi
Feb.	: Solidarity in Fellowship	Personal Ethics in Islam
Mar.	: «Servants of the Word»	Comparative Muslim-Christian Accounts of Man and His Nature
Apr.	: «The Law of Liberty»	Studies in a Mosque
May	: Consecration in the Spirit	The Meaning of Ramadan
June	: The Blessedness of Commitment	Islam and Karl Marx

The May-June issue includes a request for comments upon the whole concept of the *Operation Reach* study paper,

and provides a questionnaire for detailed evaluation of its usefulness to the individual. The Triennial Meeting in April was eager for a continuation of the paper beyond its May-June issue, with whatever adaptations might seem advisable in view of the answers to the questionnaire.

From July 8th to 29th Dr. Cragg will conduct a Summer School in Jerusalem. During the three weeks there will be a full morning of studies five day a week, and an evening or late afternoon session. Afternoons and weekends will be free. The first morning session wil be a study in «The Word of the Gospel». The second will be readings in the Qur'an, with reference to the Arabic text, (yet not such as to deter non-Arabists.) The third will be concerned with the ruling ideas in Muslim religious life, «The Muslim's World». The evening session will take up practical problems of contemporary Islam, superstition, Muslim and Christian terms, etc. There will be a variety of leadership, in addition to Dr. Cragg's contribution. Many of those enrolled as students will give of their own experience in different sessions. More than fifty have already signified their intention to attend, some from Algeria, Aden, Sudan, and Iran, in addition to the nearer countries.

These first two years of the Study Program have been experimental in trying to find out whether there is primarily need for a peripatetic program that holds institutes in all the different countries of the area whenever possible, or whether a centralized program located in one spot can better serve the needs of Christian workers. These two methods of procedure, each very useful in its own way, were carefully studied by the Triennial Meeting, which sought to combine them in voting «that continued provision be made for widespread local institutes on the present pattern, in close consultation with local bodies,» and «that in due course, and in the light of developing circumstances, plans be made to give the Program a more

definite base, in relation to some institution either in Beirut or Jerusalem». The development of this plan, and of other matters in connection with the Study Program, will be the responsibility primarily of the Committee on the Study Program, of which the chairman is Archbishop MacInnes of Jerusalem. We look forward with expectation to what may be built on the very promising beginnings of the last eighteen months.

July in Jerusalem

Over eighty church workers gathered in Jerusalem in July for the Summer School of the Study Program on Islam of the N.E.C.C. The sessions ran from July 8th to 29th, and were carried through without curtailment in spite of the sudden political developments in the Near East between those dates. Dr. Kenneth Cragg, Director of the Study Program, carried the chief weight of the lectures, with help from Rev. E.F.F. Bishop, who came especially from England, Dr. Mohammad Rahbar of Ankara, Canon Edward Every of Jerusalem, and Dr. Yusuf Shammas and Dr. Harry Dorman of Beirut. Panel discussions were greatly enriched by the contributions of experienced church and mission folk representing areas from Muscat and Aden to Tunis and Algiers, and from Omdurman to Istanbul.

THE UNFINISHED WORK

A REPORT OF REFUGEES

«Ten years of suffering on the part of the Arab refugees has had no appreciable effect upon the conscience of the world with respect to any solution of the basic problem.

«The NECC has throughout this period sought to minister in the Name of Christ and on behalf of the churches to the needs of the refugees. It expresses deep appreciation to the giving churches for their generous support, both spiritual and material, of its program of refugee work. It commends to the churches the report of the executive secretary for refugee work and calls for the continuance of support for relief and for vocational projects. Such humanitarian action, essential though it is, cannot, however, meet the basic need.

«At its last plenary meeting in 1955 the NECC appealed to Christian churches to call upon governments to effect a just and lasting solution. However, the political issues which lie at the root of the problem remain the focus of deadly infection which poisons the whole body of the Near East.

«The NECC urges the churches, therefore, to initiate prayerfully new efforts to disseminate adequate information and to arouse public concern on the Palestine problem. It furthermore calls upon the churches to renew

Canon A. Kenneth Cragg, as he directed thinking toward Operation Reach.

The Rev. Swailem Sidhom, telling of the mission work of the Coptic Evangelical Church in the Sudan

In point of discussion
Left to right, Mr. E. Samaha, from Beirut; the Rev. Hans Aurbakken, Algeria; Bishop Zgon Der-Hagopian, Primate of Armenian Orthodox Church in Iraq.

At dinner for the NECC delegates
Left to right , Rev. Daud Haddad, Jordan; Mrs. Newell Steward Greece ; Dr. Dorman ; Dr. Roland Scott, New York

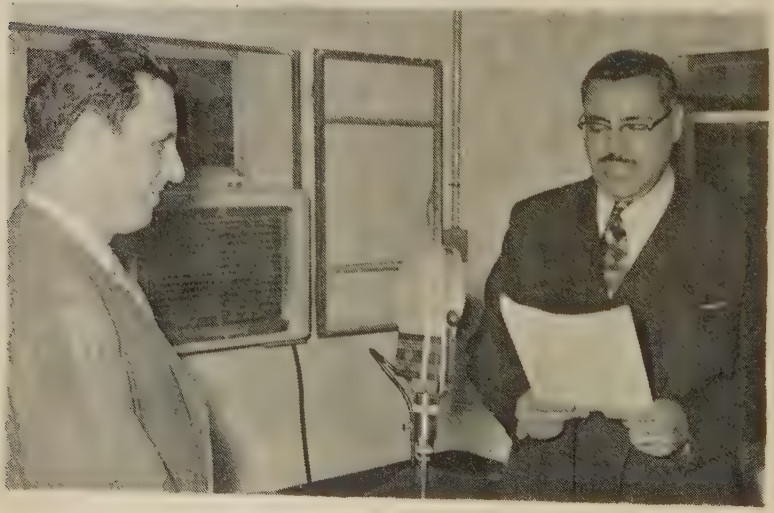
More converse

1. to r., Mr. Kheirallah of Beirut Church, Archbishop MacInnes, Dr. Farid Audeh, Bishop Lesslie Newbigin.

From converse to food

1. to r., Miss Martha Roy, Egypt; Mrs. Matilda Greiss, Home and Family Life chairman ; Rev. Lloyd Swift, Turkey

In plenary session
Listening to report of Mr. Chemayel of Beirut YMCA dealing with Home and Family Life Committee.



NECCRAVCO Working
Dr. Nadim Makdisi and the Rev. Ayad Zachary.

their approaches to governments concerned, and particularly to those of the West, to formulate and implement a plan for solution. There is at stake the freedom and dignity of a million refugees and peace and stability in the Near East.

«May the churches seize this opportunity for action, making the Gospel of reconciliation relevant to the desperate human need of this area».

In these words, the Triennial Meeting underlined the thrilling, yet sobering, report of Mr. Willard Jones, Executive Secretary of the Committee for Refugee Work. The report for 1957 focused attention on the varied aspects of the work of the committee, representing a budgetary expense of $222,400, channeled through the world Council of Churches and worldwide benevolent gifts.

Nevertheless, Mr. Jones once again prefaced his report with an appeal «for the development under divine guidance of a just and viable political solution which will free us all to get on with our concluding task» of hellp'ng refugees to reestablish their homes and their own means of livelihood. Over the past six years, the numbers of the refugees have increased by some 80,000. Their rations remain as inadequate as in earlier years, and their sedentary life in camps and huts has tended to lower their sense of home and community responsibility. In addition, pent-up feelings have often been channeled into expressions of bitterness toward former friends in the West whom they hold responsible for their plight.

The relief work of the Committee is divided into the distribution of clothing and foodstuffs among the various areas of the refugee work. Gifts of clothing increased this year over past years, with a corresponding higher percentage of suita-

ble clothing in the flood of bales, boxes and cartons. Wheat flour, corn meal, beans, rice, milk powder, chopped meat and syrup are all contributing to changing the eating habits of the Middle East, as more and more are discovering the merits of soy beans, the possibilities of milk powder, and the nourishment of Wisconsin processed cheese. Medical assistance is also included in this aspect of the relief work, as the workers strive to fight against malnutrition among the refugees through multi-vitamin tablets.

A second phase of the program is listed under rehabilitation, which includes the giving of loans to enable refugees to retain former skills, and to provide for the necessary spiritual uplift so desperately required. There are also certain projects in which the committee is sharing such as vocational training for all refugees.

In addition to the work carried on directly by the Committee, the report also includes an account of what each of the different voluntary agencies operating in the area has done for the Palestinian refugees by means of funds supplied through its own organization. There are reports of some eighteen agencies, with an additional ten or more unheard from.

All over the world, each Sunday, countless Christians pray for the peace of Jerusalem. How vital this prayer must continue to be is emphasized by this quotation from Mr. Jones' report :

«Jerusalem still remains a city divided by high walls, barbed wire entanglements and a No-Man's Land strewn with mines and other deadly devices. On the cold hilltops to the north and south of the city are numerous camps where thousands of refugees from Jaffa and the Plain of Sharon wait in

sight of their homes for their eventual return from exile. Their patient, steady faith is based on their belief in the justice and mercy of Almighty God rather than in the justice and wisdom of man.»

The Council received with thanks the report of Mr. Jones and elected him once again to continue his faithful and capable services to the Palestinian refugees. The hope was also prayerfully offered that a solution to the whole problem might come to pass, and that implementation of that solution might fall within the offices of the *NECC* in the years to come. With the far-ranging duties of the Secretary, almost two-thirds of his time is spent in the field. While in Jerusalem, his home is usually a center for round-table discussions with tourists, traveling seminars, and concerned friends.

The task of the Refugee Committee still remains a piece of unfinished work to which the whole Church is called as it bears the work of reconciliation to all men. Its very nature calls us to work without ceasing, even as we pray, for the solution of this problem. Although we recognize no Christian politics, we must continue to prick the conscience of the world, keeping all men aware of the desperate human need, and the work which Christ calls us to complete in His Name.

TO BE READ . . .

THE FUTURE IN LITERATURE

«For less than $110, one can purchase every title of the literature currently offered by the agencies cooperating with the Literature Department of the *NECC*.» With these challenging words, the Literature Secretary, Mr. Habib Said, began his report on publications and the work of his committee. Although recognizing the great and profound values of cooperative enterprise in this field, nevertheless the output of new titles is still poor. However, plans for the new year include the production of many new books on a great variety of themes, from family and home life to theology and devotion.

The cooperating agencies in this work include the Beirut Literature Committee, the Literature Board of the Episcopal Church in Egypt, the Nile Mission Press, the Literature and Literacy Committee of the Synod of the Nile, and the Fellowship of Christian Writers. These agencies offer approximately 340 titles of translated, adapted, or original books. These are predominantly books on the study of the Bible, devotional books, children's stories, novels, plays, and new literate materials. Most of the literature produced is for the Christian reader, although an attempt is being made to reach the Muslim both evangelistically and intellectually.

An example of this type of literature is to be found in

the two volumes published this year by the Christian Writers' Fellowship. These two books dealing with the Incarnation and the Trinity have sought to present in modern terms the timeless message of the heart of the Christian faith to those who stand outside of the tradition. With the help and guidance of the Study Program Director, Dr. Kenneth Cragg, more books of this type will be published within the coming year. The appearance of several books by Muslim authors on Christ and Christianity has stimulated the desire to present fully and faithfully the Person of our Lord to all men.

In the field of sales, a great increase was noted over past years. Whereas the increase in publication was only 3 %, the increase in distribution was 46 %. However, the number of pages sold has not yet matched the number of pages printed during the year.

Books published in Iran, Turkey and the Sudan were also listed in the Secretary's report. Special mention was made of the excellent work that is being done in Turkey in the preparation of children's books and literature. This is a field that has not yet adequately been met by the Arabic Christian Literature Committee, and the work that has been done in Turkey illustrates what can be done.

Much publication was done in the field of literacy, especially in Egypt. Here the literacy work is becoming a very promising movement within the church. In this field results are most clearly shown of the impact of literature upon people.

«In the village of Deir el Barsha, a literacy campaign was begun in February and completed in December. A census taken before the campaign showed that there were in the vil-

lage 1683 illiterates who were physically able to learn to read. During the months of the campaign, 1011 of these illiterates were taught to read and write, and more than 500 completed the entire course of 13 books... The most interesting new development is the Bible Study Campaign. The purpose of this project is to lead the new literates into reading and studying the Bible... The total enrolled is now over 500».

The question remains of the influence of these publications upon those who read them. It is a question difficult to assess. Yet the increase in the volume of sales illustrates clearly the increasing interest in literature. That we should meet this interest with an increasing number of challenging titles and thought-provoking books is the test that is set before us for the coming year. To be read means clearly that people are waiting to find a new challenge for their thoughts. Books to be read are «not men and yet they are alive. They are man's memory and his aspiration.... the tools he builds with.»

AND TO BE HEARD . . .

NECCRAVCO'S AIMS

One of the most active committees of the *Near East Christian Council* is also the Committee with the longest name, the *NECC* Radio and Audio Visual Committee. To this title should presumably be added another letter, for the report of the secretary revealed plans to break out into the field of television programming, and to supply programs for the many television stations that are growing up in the Near East.

This year marks the completion of a number of extremely vital projects, and although the appropriate time has not yet come for its most necessary developments, the establishment of a Radio Station, nevertheless when that time comes, they will be ready. Credit galore goes to the secretary, the Rev. Harold A. Fisher, who this year leaves for furlough in the United States. He leaves behind him however a number of well-trained leaders, including the new secretary, Dr. Nadim Makdisi, who has recently been appointed by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to assist in this work.

The Triennial Meeting was preceded by a three-day conference and workshop session of the committee in Beirut. During these days, direction was given to a great number in the use of drama in the classroom, and simple aids in the classroom, such as flannelgraph and slides and filmstrips. There was also one session devoted to the theme of radio programming. Leadership in this was largely drawn from local sources.

Dr. Makdisi, the new secretary, is especially well fitted to carry out the work that has begun in the *NECC* radio studio at the Beirut College for Women. For the past twelve years, he has been in charge of the Arabic radio programming department for the Voice of America in Washington, D.C. He is the holder of several graduate degrees from colleges in the United States, including a PhD from Washington University in Washington, D.C. In returning to Beirut, he is returning home, as he is the son of Professor Anis Makdisi, formerly head of the Department of Arabic Studies at the American University of Beirut.

Mention was also made in the secretary's report of the appointment of the Rev. Edwin M. Luidens, formerly co-chairman, to the post of Executive Secretary of the Radio, Visual Education and Mass Communications Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., an organization familiarly known as RAVEMCCO. The Rev. Mr. Luidens assumed this position the first of the year, and is the first full-time executive in the post.

Six radio stations in the Near East used the family life radio serial *Da'ini 'Uhawil,* which was produced by the committee. This serial consisted of thirteen programs, each fifteen minutes in length, dramatizing the life of a typical modern Arab city-dwelling family. The most favorable reception of this program has created much enthusiasm and confidence in new attempts.

A plan is being worked out now for the development of a film on Christian family life. Such a film might find a great market with the new television stations now springing up. It would be drawn entirely from local characters, emphasizing the expressed desire of the committee to produce films

that are indigenous to the culture of the Near East. The advent of television to the Near East is a fact of great importance. At the present time, there is a television station in operation in Baghdad, another is scheduled to open in Beirut, and Cairo and Istanbul are expected to open work shortly. Other areas are experimenting, such as Kuwait. In addition to the development of this film of Christian family life, use will also be made of a study of American films suitable for use on local TV stations, prepared by RAVEMCCO.

The Committee occasionally publishes a pamphlet magazine entitled «*News and Views*» which offers advice on the various methods of production and presentation of materials. It also keeps up to date on what the various areas are doing in this line.

There is hardly an area in the entire Middle East where one is not struck by the influence of the radio, the cinema, and the printed page. Doubtless in the years to come, the television screen will also be of great importance in many areas. Through this committee, great advances have been made in bringing the visualized message before people, both Christian and non-Christian alike. The opportunities of film, tape-recorder, or flannelgraph are still there for all to share, but cooperatively the new hopes of radio and television open broader vistas. That men may hear, that they may see, that they might know.....

GHANA AND BEIRUT - 1958

TWO MEETINGS OF SINGLE AIM

Should the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches be integrated into a single organization that seeks to fulfill the purposes of both? Or should these two great Councils continue to run parallel courses «in association with eachother» as they have been doing for the past ten years? These are questions being prayerfully considered by the member churches of the WCC and the member councils of the IMC. At the Assembly of the IMC in Ghana early this year their implications were very thoroughly discussed and examined, and certain decisions reached in regard to the further study of the whole matter.

The International Missionary Council was founded in 1921, in order to link together national and regional missionary councils in various parts of the world, and to encourage and strengthen the interdenominational contacts and the cooperative work that had begun to grow up through these regional councils. The whole movement of international and interdenominational cooperation had been stimulated greatly by, and to some extent had grown out of, the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910. The IMC has now been operating for thirty-seven years, throughout which time it has worked through its member councils to promote «the spirit of wisdom, fellowship, mutual understanding and the desire to cooperate», has sought to deepen «the sense of missionary obligation in the churches throughout the world», and

has shaped missionary strategy in many different fields. Important conferences of the IMC were held at Jerusalem in 1928, at Madras in 1938, at Whitby, Canada, in 1947, at Willingen, Germany, in 1952, and in Ghana in 1957-8. At present thirty-eight councils all over the world make up the membership of the IMC.

The World Council of Churches was formed in 1948. It is «a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior». This Council also grew out of movements that had their inception to some extent in the Edinburgh Conference in 1910. While questions of faith and order were excluded from that conference as being matters too divisive for general discussion, many believed that the churches must face these differences in common and frank discussion. The Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order in 1927 represented this interest, and the continuation committee carried forward its work for the next two decades. Similarly, the Conference of Life and Work at Stockholm in 1925 represented the desire of those who felt the churches should come together in their practical witness in the face of the problems of modern society, and the continuation committee of this conference also carried forward a series of cooperative studies. These two movements, one in the realm of the faith of the churches, and the other in the realm of Christian witness in modern life, drew close together, and out of them grew the proposal for a World Council of Churches. The WCC now includes within itself the tasks that were being carried on by the two movements. One hundred and sixty-nine churches are now members of the WCC. From its very beginning, the Council has been «in association with» the IMC.

The Joint Committee of the two Councils has become progressively more important and more active, and the fields in which the Councils overlapped or found themselves in con-

stant cooperation have become broader and more numerous every year. Especially in the work of the WCC Division of Inter-Church Aid have the interests of the IMC been caught up into the activities of the WCC. Not only emergency needs, with which the Division of Inter-Church Aid began, but also other needs of churches in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as well as Europe have become in part the responsibilty of the WCC.

Why should these two Councils become integrated into a single organism? The answer has been given thus : «The *unity* of the Church and the *mission* of the Church both belong, in equal degree, to the *essence* of the Church». The IMC was itself called into being because it was seen that disunity in mission is harmful to mission; and the WCC is constantly confronted with the question, «Unity for what?» and with its answer : «That the world may believe.» It is thus quite impossible that one Council should feel itself responsible for the unity of the Church and the other for the mission of the Church. Both Councils exist «to help the churches witness to the wholeness of the Gospel».

In addition to this deeper, theological reason for coming closer together into a single organism, there are practical considerations. It has become increasingly clear that many of the same churchmen are called to give leadership in the two bodies, and for the most part the same churches and societies are concerned in the activities of both. This has caused considerable duplication of effort in recent years, and much more organizational red tape than is strictly necessary for the reaching of the goals intended. To the younger churches this is especially confusing. The churches of Asia have been practically unanimous in seeking integration of the IMC and the WCC, and in expressing their impatience with the delays in

procedure involved. To them, mission has always been the essence of church life, and unity a desirable goal in mission work.

The Draft Plan of Integration, which is now before the two Councils for study, has been drawn up by the Joint Committee, and studied, revised, and redrafted during the last two years. From the very first, the Joint Committee has insisted that any integration should be in «a form which ensures that missions belong to the heart of the ecumenical movement» and on «lines which would bring the missionary forces into closer relationship with all phases of the Church's witness in the life of the world, and engage the fullest resources of the churches in the task of formulating and fulfilling their mission in terms commensurate with the needs of the world today and with the nature of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.» It has not been planned to absorb one organization into another, but to produce a «new structure which can more adequately care for the concerns of both».

The Draft Plan provides for several radical changes in the framework of the WCC, in order that the work of the IMC might be carried forward within it and extended further. The chief features are the following :

(1) The creation of a Commission of World Mission and Evangelism of 115 members, who would meet every six years in the intervals between meetings of the WCC Assembly. Eighty of these members might be appointed by the present member councils of the IMC, and the other thirty-five would be appointed by the Central Committee of the WCC, in order to draw in the full WCC constituency into the work of the Commission. The functions of the Commission would be closely similar to the purpose and functions of the IMC at present.

(2) The creation of a Division of World Mission and

Evangelism, similar to the present Divisions within the WCC, with a Divisional Committee of twenty persons to carry out the policy and program of the Commission.

(3) The appointment of a Director of the Division of World Mission and Evangelism, who shall serve as secretary of the Commission and be an Associate General Secretary of the WCC.

(4) The representation within the WCC Assembly and Central Committee of those from all parts of the world with special knowledge and experience in the field of mission.

(5) The affiliation to the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of national and regional Councils, and the fostering by the Commission of relationships with missionary agencies which are not members of affiliated councils.

(6) The reexamination and redefinition of all divisional and departmental activities of the WCC to ensure that «each division and department will express in its program and activities the missionary dimension of the Church's calling».

The whole question of integration is under study. There is no final decision to implement it as yet. The Ghana Assembly in January commended the Draft Plan to member organizations for further study, and accepted «in principle» the integration of the two Councils. It requested the World Council of Churches to postpone its Assembly announced for 1960 until one year later in order to allow more time for study of the Plan. There is still a good deal of misunderstanding about the meaning of integration, and a fear that «the ultimate outcome would be a relegation of missions to peripheral inconsequence». Such a danger must be resolutely faced and removed if integration is to have meaning. If «the deadening hand of ecclesiasticism» is going to affect the fervor and intensity of the missionary drive, then integration is to be avoided at all costs. Only if the meaning of the missionary task is to be enlarged and extended, only if it is to be made central to the

whole activity of the WCC, can integration be gladly accepted by the member councils of the IMC as a step forward in the proclaiming of the gospel to all people.

The time-table for further action on integration is as follows : The IMC has asked for comment on the Plan from its member organizations by April 30th, 1959. A final revised Plan will be sent in 1960 to member organizations and adopted or rejected by the Administrative Committee or an Assembly of the IMC that same year or in early 1961. Six months later, if there is no constitutional objection from the member councils, that official action will be reported to the WCC in time for consideration and action at its Assembly in 1961.

(The above article is deeply indebted, not only for material but also for phraseology and quotations, not always indicated, to the pamphlet *Why Integration,* published by the International Missionary Council, 2 Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1, 1957.)

Adventures in Typography

This issue of the *News Bulletin* has undergone dramatic developments in getting through the press. The manuscripts were ready early in June, and were submitted to a printing establishment in Beirut. Not long after, its premises were occupied by armed bands, and the press was shut down. At some risk, the manuscripts were eventually extricated, and were submitted to another press in late July. There, bullets severed the power lines twice in one week, bringing machines to a standstill each time. In August the second press was threatened with enforced closure. In early September we have our fingers crossed as the final proofs are being read.

TRAVELS OF THE SECRETARY

At the end of June the Executive Secretary was present for the first week of the Annual Meeting of the American Congregational Near East Mission in Uskudar, across the Bosphorus from Istanbul. One significant matter under discussion was the relationship of the mission to the evangelical churches of eastern Turkey, and the relation of these somewhat isolated congregations to other churches both within and without Turkey.

The Secretary returned to Beirut early in July for the Annual Meeting of the American Presbyterian Mission in Syria and Lebanon. Dominating all the sessions was the implementation of the plan for complete integration of the mission into the life of the national evangelical church. It is expected that if preparatory programs proceed according to schedule, the final unification will take place in the spring of 1959.

The Secretary missed the first week of the Study Program's summer course in Jerusalem; but the remaining two weeks gave good opportunity for meeting old friends and making new friends from every part of the Near East mission field. Notes on the summer course are found elsewhere in this issue.

August 14th to 20th was a rich experience in Greece, where new contacts were made with the Evangelical Church of Greece and with the Armenian member churches there of the Armenian Evangelical Union. The community social work of the American Mission and its educational work in Pierce College for women are impressive. We had a good session with the Fellowship of Evangelical Leaders, and visited the summer camp of the Swiss Mission in Kephissia. The refugee relief program of the World Council or Churches and of Church World Service is quite extensive in Greece. It was possible to see something of the resettlement and rehabilitation projects.

At the end of August, the Secretary is to be in Egypt.

Committees

Advance Program	Dr. Farid Audeh, Chairman
Home and Family Life	Mrs. Matilda Greiss
Radio, Audio Visual	Dr. Nadim Makdisi
Refugee Relief	Mr. Porter Young
Religious Education	Mr. William Haddad
Scholarship	Dr. Ewing Bailey
Study Program	Archbishop Campbell MacInnes
Theological Education	Dr. Butrus Abdel Malik

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Home and Family Life	Mrs. Matilda Greiss 215, Sh. Ramses, Cairo, Egypt
Medical	Dr. Peter Manoogian CMC Hospital, Beirut, Lebanon
Government Relations	The Rev. William Sage Woolworth, Jr., American Near East Mission, Istanbul, Turkey
Rural Work	The Rev. Samuel Habib Literacy House, Minia, Egypt
Spiritual Life of the Church	The Rev. Tanios Zakhary American Mission, Cairo, Egypt
Work for the Blind	Miss S.M.C. Gaster C.M.S. Mission, Isfahan, Iran
Youth Work	The Rev. Ayyad Zakhary American Mission, Cairo, Egypt

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